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ABSTRACT

This monograph presents information about programs identified during the 1992, 1993, and 1994 national searches for exemplary vocational education programs. Background information on the search is presented in the first section. The second section provides a description of the 20 exemplary program components and best practices for each component. This section discusses emerging characteristics and other commonalities that exemplary programs share. The third section contains a brief description of the recognized exemplary programs with an emphasis on outcomes and best practices from each program. Each description includes location, telephone, coordinator, target population, number served per year, total staff, cost per participant, educational setting, and year named exemplary. The 15 programs are as follows: Outreach Equity Nontraditional program; Project GRADS; Employment Specialist Program; The Learning Achievement Program for the Learning Disabled; Electronic Manufacturing Support Specialist Program; ENCORE!; CHOICE; Reentry Transition Program; Center for High Tech Training for Individuals with Disabilities; Mission Trails Regional Occupational Program's Assessment Program; Supermarket Careers Community-Based Transition; Nontraditional Options Project; Network of Services and Transformation; Partnership for Professional Technical Education Services; and Great Oaks Special Needs Occupational Development Program. The appendixes include the rating form and a checklist for providers to assess their own programs. (YLB)

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National Center for Research in Vocational Education

University of California, Berkeley

PROFILES AND BEST PRACTICES: EXEMPLARY VOCATIONAL SPECIAL POPULATIONS PROGRAMS

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PROFILES AND BEST PRACTICES: EXEMPLARY VOCATIONAL SPECIAL POPULATIONS PROGRAMS

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INTRODUCTION

To close the achievement gap between disadvantaged students and their peers, educators should learn by example from those who have already done so.

Asa Hilliard

Background

"Where can I get information about exemplary programs [for students with disabilities, with limited English proficiency, and so on]?"
"How can I develop an exemplary program?"
"How do I know if my program is exemplary?"

The Office of Student Services (OSS)* frequently responds to the above questions about exemplary programs in a continued effort to disseminate information on best vocational special populations practices. The questions have resulted in part from the widely publicized national search for exemplary vocational education programs that the OSS has conducted for the past five years. During this time, OSS has recognized a total of 25 exemplary programs. In addition to learning about each of these programs, OSS has also better defined what makes all programs truly outstanding. It has shared this information through various publications and papers, and through presentations at seminars and conferences. In addition, information regarding these exemplary programs is included in the OSS database and thereby included in topical bibliographies distributed free to those requesting them. This monograph is written as part of OSS's continued efforts to disseminate exemplary program information, as well as information about the exemplary search process. OSS believes that this process is worthy of replication by other agencies with similar objectives. The discussion begins with a background of the exemplary program search.

The purposes of OSS's national recognition program are to (1) identify exemplary vocational education programs serving students who are classified as members of special populations, (2) provide information to others for improving their own programs, and

* Formerly the Office of Special Populations

(3) assist those interested in developing their own vocational programs for students from special populations.

A crucial step in the process was to determine the criteria for naming exemplary programs. This task was completed in 1989 when, as part of the former Office of Special Populations' activities, NCRVE researchers L. Allen Phelps and Thomas Wermuth (1992) conducted an extensive review of related literature on how exemplary programs are identified. The review culminated in the development of a framework for identifying exemplary programs. This framework consisted of twenty components that characterize exemplary programs. A pilot test of the framework was conducted and the first search followed in 1990. An annual search was conducted thereafter until 1994.

The searches were open to all vocational programs serving students who are members of special populations, including individuals with disabilities, students considered economically or academically disadvantaged, those with limited-English proficiency, those in programs designed to eliminate gender bias, and individuals in correctional institutions. Eligible programs included those serving one or more of the above groups at the secondary, postsecondary, and adult levels. The programs were either school-based or community-based.

How the Programs Were Evaluated

Persons interested in applying for the exemplary recognition program responded to a call for applications. The application form consisted of three parts. The first part requested general information about the program, including the title, program contacts, and address. The second part requested information about the program such as population served, number of staff, and budget and outcomes such as number of entrants into the program, number completing the program, and number of students employed. The third part was considered the heart of the application. In this section, applicants were required to provide the program abstract, its history, and information about the program operation. Part Four required descriptions of each of the twenty components as they applied to the program. In addition to the descriptions, applicants were required to submit documents and other evidence supporting their descriptions. Supporting documents included names of advisory committee members, minutes of meetings, evidence of participation in

professional development activities, follow-up and evaluation reports, and transition plans. Once an application was received, it underwent a preliminary, internal check for completeness of information. Each application was evaluated by three national experts in the field of vocational education for special populations, using the framework and the descriptions as criteria (see Appendix A). In addition to rating the applications, OSS requested evaluators to recommend programs for site visits. Evaluators were encouraged to recommend programs they felt were outstanding without regard to geographic limitations, program settings, level of students served, or type of population served. OSS conducted site visits to recommended programs with the highest ranking. The purpose of the site visits was to examine program processes and verify program claims (Walberg & Niemiec, 1993). During the site visits, OSS conducted interviews with students, teachers, coordinators, and administrators and toured the physical facilities, other program sites, or student work sites. To standardize the interview procedure, a set of questions was developed from information provided in the application and used as a guide. OSS made final decisions about which programs were to be recognized as exemplary upon completion of the site visits.

How This Monograph Is Organized

This monograph presents information about programs identified during the 1992, 1993, and 1994 searches. Background information on the exemplary program search is presented in this first section. The second section provides a description of the twenty exemplary program components (Phelps & Wermuth, 1992) and best practices for each component. This section also provides additional explanations of the question "What makes a program exemplary?" by discussing emerging characteristics and other commonalities that exemplary programs share. The third section contains a brief description of the recognized exemplary programs with an emphasis on outcomes and best practices from each program. The appendices include the rating form used by OSS to evaluate exemplary programs and a checklist for programs to assess their own program exemplariness.

Related Publications

The results of the 1990 and 1991 searches are published in two monographs, *Exemplary Vocational Programs Serving Special Populations*, Volume 1 (MDS-303) and Volume 2 (MDS-424). In addition, several topical papers published by the OSS have featured past exemplary program winners. Available from OSS, these papers include the following:

- *National Recognition Program for Exemplary Vocational Education Programs Serving Special Needs Populations*, BRIEF, Vol. 1, No. 3
- *Boulder Valley Schools Teen Parenting Program: An Exemplary Vocational Education Program Serving a Population with Special Needs*, BRIEF, Vol. 2, No. 3
- *Transitioning Vocational Services: An Exemplary Vocational Program Serving Youth with Special Needs*, BRIEF, Vol. 3, No. 2
- *The 1993 National Exemplary Programs: Profiles of Excellence*, BRIEF, Vol. 5, No. 3

WHAT MAKES PROGRAMS EXEMPLARY?

Exemplary Program Components

OSS reviewers based their evaluations of applications to the exemplary program search on descriptions and supporting evidence provided for twenty components originally developed by Phelps and Wermuth (1992). Below is a list of those components. The description of each component is adapted from the application form used by the OSS during the 1994 and previous years' searches. For each component, some of the best practices in exemplary programs are also described.

A. Program Administration

1. Administrative Leadership and Support

In programs with strong administrative support, staff and students know who to approach to communicate ideas, problems, and other matters. A decision-making structure exists and the staff and other personnel understand this structure. There is a mutual understanding and appreciation between the administrators and staff. Many good programs use site-based management principles.

Best Practices:

- An organizational chart identifying operational elements and administrative personnel in charge is available.
- Administrative support is provided in such areas as funding, advocacy, and marketing.

2. Financial Support

Program personnel are active and creative in identifying and soliciting additional funding for the program. Coordinators are usually knowledgeable about the recurring and nonrecurring costs associated with the program, including personnel salaries, staff training, equipment and material, and other special costs required to successfully implement and maintain the program. Most good programs have a budget with strong local/institutional support.

3. Professional Development

Professional development activities include any preservice, inservice, and/or continuing education obtained by program staff, as well as trainings conducted by staff for others such as supplemental teachers, other programs, or educational agencies. Staff are encouraged to participate in appropriate staff development activities.

Best Practices:

- Inservice or continuing education is provided for all program staff.
- A committee of staff members oversees the planning and conducting of inservice professional development activities. The committee also controls the professional development budget.
- Support/incentives are available for staff to attend inservice activities.

4. Formative Program Evaluation

Formative or ongoing evaluations should be collected routinely. Staff appreciate the need for an evaluation and use the data to improve programs.

Best Practices:

- Data on program effectiveness is collected through surveys and other assessment methods.
- Program evaluation reports are prepared and available at regular intervals during the year (e.g., monthly or quarterly reports).
- Feedback on program effectiveness is obtained from teachers and other staff members, students, parents, business/community representatives, and other individuals or groups.

5. Summative Program Evaluation

Summative evaluation should be gathered annually or biannually. It should include information about the program purpose and goals, have a design suited to the goals, and use appropriate instruments and procedures. In good programs, staff understand the need for an evaluation and appreciate the value of the data collected.

Best Practices:

- The evaluation is conducted by either an internal or an external evaluator.

- Sufficient information is collected to provide evidence of effectiveness (e.g., completion rate, retention rate, number receiving services).
- The evaluation data is used for program improvement.

B. Curriculum and Instruction

1. Individualized Curriculum Modifications

Good programs individualize all aspects of the curriculum to fit the needs of the students. Programs which serve students with disabilities have comprehensive individualized education plans (IEPs). Programs serving other groups also have transition or career plans for students.

Best Practices:

- The curriculum is modified through any of the following means: use of computers, writing or adapting separate lesson plans, use of other media to deliver instruction, use of teacher aides, use of tutors, and use of mentors.
- The individualized educational planning process involves teachers, students, counselors, parents, transition specialists, and vocational educators.

2. Integration of Academic and Vocational Curricula

Integrating academic and vocational education has proven to be an extremely effective way of educating students, especially those who are at risk of failing in the traditional classroom. Programs that have an integrated curriculum require students to complete a sequence of courses and to master identified competencies or skills to complete the program. Such programs allow students with special learning needs to complete their work on an individualized time plan.

Best Practices:

- Integration of academic and vocational curricula occurs through use of applied academic learning materials, integrated courses, team teaching between academic and vocational teachers, involvement in Tech Prep initiatives, and participation in career academies.

3. Appropriate Instructional Settings

Educational programs should reflect the diversity of the school's student population. The program meets the needs, backgrounds, abilities, and interests of program participants. While the number and classification of participants who are from special populations are available, other students are unaware of any special classification of their classmates.

Best Practice:

- Students who are members of special populations are fully included in regular education classes or included to the greatest extent possible.

4. Cooperative Learning Experiences

Cooperative learning experiences (i.e., students learning from other students) have proved to be an excellent way for students from special populations to learn. Good programs offer a variety of cooperative learning experiences to participants. These experiences relate to the purposes and goals of the program.

Best Practices:

- There are opportunities for, and students avail themselves of, the following cooperative learning experiences: group projects, in or out of the classroom; peer tutoring; and participation in student organizations.

C. Comprehensive Support Services

1. Assessment of Vocational Interests and Abilities

Programs that are exemplary have established a comprehensive program to assess students. They have paid close attention to the process, resources, and materials used to assess the vocational interests, aptitudes, and abilities of program participants. They also individualize the assessment process so that each student has only those assessments needed.

Best Practices:

- Each students' individual interests and abilities are assessed using a combination of instruments and techniques as needed.
- Assessment begins during 8th grade or lower.

2. Instructional Support Services

Instructional support services are vital to meeting the purposes and goals of the program. They include good resources, special materials, and/or additional personnel (e.g., teacher aides) who uniquely assist in achieving the stated goals of the program. Good programs continually seek better services to increase the chance for student success.

Best Practices:

- The following services are available: tutors; mentors; rehabilitation counselors; psychologists; job coaches; adaptive devices; financial support for books, tools, and so on; and child care.

3. Career Guidance and Counseling

Career guidance and counseling services are crucial to the success of program participants. Good career guidance programs are integrated into other programs in the institution with leadership provided by qualified counselors. Each student has an individual education plan, transition plan, or individual career plan that serves as their road map to the future. Credentialed counselors should assist all students in the school/institution.

Best Practices:

- Career guidance and counseling programs are led by certified guidance counselors and integrated into the school's/institution's other programs.
- The following guidance and counseling activities are conducted: individual and group counseling, assessment of interests and abilities, career planning, consulting with teachers and parents, group counseling, job shadowing, field trips to various businesses, referrals, and follow-up evaluations.
- There is a realistic guidance counselor-to-student ratio.

D. Formalized Articulation and Communication

1. Family/Parental Involvement and Support

Active participation of parents in program activities has been shown to enhance student and program success. Parents are involved in general program planning and development as well as in planning for their children. Parents feel welcome and are involved in all decision-making aspects of the program.

Best Practices:

- Specific areas where parents and family members are involved include school management, new program planning, evaluation, and their children's programs.

2. Notification of Both Students and Parents Regarding Vocational Opportunities

The Perkins Act requires secondary program staff to inform potential students who are members of special populations and their parents of vocational education options available through the program. Good programs provide thorough information and have clearly defined methods, procedures, and resources to accomplish this mandate. Notification often

includes information about vocational education program options, as well as available support services.

Best Practices:

- Information about vocational opportunities is available before or during the 9th grade.
- Brochures, newsletters, and other forms of information dissemination are used (e.g., radio, newspapers, presentations in community) in a format that both students and parents will understand.
- Information about the following is disseminated: available programs and specific courses, eligibility for enrollment, available special services, employment opportunities, placement, and financial assistance.

3. Vocational Educators' Involvement in Individualized Educational Planning

Vocational educators should be involved in the individual instruction planning process used by the program.

Best Practices:

- Vocational teachers of classes that students have expressed an interest in taking are informed participants in individualized educational planning meetings.
- The roles of vocational teachers and others involved are clearly stated.

4. Formalized Transition Planning

An effective program should provide individual program participants with formalized transition planning. Transition can be defined as the movement of a completing student from one level or program to the next appropriate level or program (e.g., from a secondary school setting to a postsecondary vocational education program, a community-based rehabilitation program,

and/or work). A comprehensive transition planning service should include the program staff involved in the transition process, outside agencies involved in the transition process, and the transitional options that generally exist for participants who are members of special populations as they exit the program. A program's involvement in Tech Prep initiatives is an important transition activity.

Best Practices:

- An individualized transition plan exists for each student preferably starting during 9th grade but no later than the 11th grade.
- The plan explains who are involved in the process and their roles, as well as the services needed to progress.
- Parents and students are actively involved in the planning process.

5. Intra- and Interagency Collaboration

Intra- and interagency collaboration serve as important avenues for funding, recruiting volunteers, and referrals. Departments and programs within the educational institution collaborate to provide support services, resources, and general assistance to the staff. Interagency cooperation is essential. All possible community resources are incorporated into the school or institution.

Best Practices:

- The employment services, rehabilitation services, health departments, agencies that operate Job Training and Partnership Act programs, and other community agencies cooperate regularly with the school/institution.
- The roles that different school departments play in the program are clearly stated.

- Involvement of the community and businesses may include the following: serving as tutors and mentors, donating cash or equipment and supplies. volunteering for various school/classroom activities, participating in advisory committees, and providing work experience and job training.

E. Occupational Experience Opportunities, Placement, and Follow-Up

1. Work Experience Opportunities

In order to successfully transition from school to work, students must avail themselves of work experience opportunities during their enrollment within the program. School services related to work experience should include information about the type and nature of work experiences that are available to program participants, how these experiences relate to the instructional objectives of the program, and the extent to which the experiences are specific to the vocational education and training received by the students.

Best Practices:

- The program provides formal work experience to students.
- Involvement in work experience is based on assessment of interests and abilities conducted by guidance counselors.
- Work experience occurs both in and out of school and is both paid and unpaid.

2. Job Placement Services

Job placement services help program participants make the transition into the workplace. Successful programs assist students, especially those who are members of special populations, in identifying available jobs (including full-time, part-time, and summer jobs). In addition, good programs assist students in securing employment following program completion.

Best Practices:

- The program is committed to a proactive search for businesses who may provide job placement to students in the program (e.g., there is a designated person with this major responsibility).
- Training or assistance in developing résumés and job interview skills is provided.
- A networking system exists which the school can draw upon for job placement.

3. Follow-Up of Graduates and Nongraduates

To accurately assess a program's outcomes, data and information should be collected by program staff from graduates and from noncompleters. Information should be analyzed, reported, and used to improve the program and services.

Best Practices:

- Programs with good follow-up data on participants collected them during these desired intervals: upon graduation, three months after graduation, or six months to a year after graduation.
- Reports summarizing the follow-up information are prepared and shared with the staff and other appropriate individuals.
- Program coordinators and staff, as well as school administrators, use this information for program planning and improvement.

Other Characteristics

While the above components used in the exemplary program search are easily recognized, OSS has also observed other *less tangible* elements in schools and institutions with outstanding programs. The following observations are drawn from (1) evaluation of

applications with extensive documentation; (2) site visits; and (3) dialogue with faculty, students, and staff.

Belief in Students' Abilities

Foremost, personnel involved in excellent programs are caring people who advocate for students and *believe in their innate abilities*. Teachers, staff, administrators, and employers all assume students are capable and take pride in their abilities, strengths, and successes. They never or rarely discuss their students' limitations or failures with us. Rather, they talk about their students' successes and how they have overcome their problems.

Teachers involved with the program sometimes admit that they have been convinced of the program's merits. These teachers are the ones who encourage reluctant colleagues to accept students with special needs into their classrooms. One teacher confessed his resistance to accepting students and/or participating in the program until he was finally persuaded into allowing a student with a learning disability into his class. That student became his star pupil. Currently, the teacher enjoys telling other faculty about his shortsightedness and the great rewards of working with students with special learning needs.

High Staff Morale

Teachers, staff, and administrators have easy, comfortable relations with each other, others within the school system or college, local employers, community groups, and parents. As a result, staff and student morale are high.

One or a Core of People Leading the Program

There is usually *one person* (or a small core of people) who is the heart of the program. This person may be an administrator, a teacher, or other staff personnel. All too often when the person leaves, the program becomes less effective. There are two lessons to be learned from this indicator:

1. Steps should be taken to institutionalize the program so that when the person(s) leaves, the program remains intact and strong.

2. One person *can* and frequently does make a difference.

Creative Problem Solving

People who work in outstanding programs find ways around barriers. When conversing with school personnel, OSS heard phrases like—

"We used to have that problem until we talked our principal into . . ."

"We learned to get around the 'nay sayers' by . . ."

"When we had no funding, we . . . [decided to write a grant; ask business for help; get the principal to free up money she was keeping for . . .]"

"We convinced the college president that the program was vital by . . ."

"In order to convince the union that we weren't weakening the contract, we . . ."

On the other hand, OSS often heard excuses from less effective schools—

"We tried that years ago! It didn't work then . . ."

"Our school board won't allow us to . . ."

"Our students aren't the type who would . . ."

"We have no funding for . . ."

"Our administration blocks any move to . . ."

"Insurance won't pay if we . . ."

Use Site-Based Management Principles

Outstanding programs usually adhere to site-based management principles although many do not know the term. When OSS first visited some of the model programs, the reviewers were unable to distinguish paraprofessionals from teachers or clerical staff from administrators!

Professional Development Is a Priority

Professional development activities are vital and welcomed by personnel. The program personnel seem to always seek a "better way" and never assume they have reached perfection.

Extensive Interactions with Business and the Community

There are many positive interactions between the school and the community/ business/industry. Education activities are viewed as a shared responsibility.

Conclusion

In the first section of this document, background for the exemplary program search conducted by OSS was presented. In addition, the second section presented OSS's observations regarding other characteristics that exemplary programs share. The second section also included a discussion of best practices for each component in the framework. Each of these—components, best practices, and emerging characteristics—offers significant insight into what makes current exemplary vocational special populations programs the best as well as insight into the continued improvement of other vocational special populations programs.

Not one best practice works for all programs. Indeed, each program must look at its own assets (inside and outside its school) and build from there. All schools are encouraged to have a common purpose, mission, and vision with the central theme revolving around the students' interests and welfare. In addition to working on each of the elements deemed necessary for programs to be successful, the other less tangible characteristics discussed previously should be considered. By encouraging (1) high staff morale, (2) leadership, (3) creative problem solving, (4) site-based management, (5) professional development, and (6) extensive interactions with business and the community, schools can begin to create an atmosphere where outstanding education can occur.

From observations and through interactions with individuals in exemplary programs, OSS concludes that for programs to become outstanding, there must be a concerted effort between teachers, administrators, and the community to improve the total program. This effort must originate from the belief that all students can be successful and that all it takes is for everyone to get together and make it happen.

EXEMPLARY VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

This section includes a brief description of exemplary programs identified during the 1992, 1993, and 1994 searches. Information for these descriptions is taken from site visits, a review of application materials, and interviews with both students and school staff (including teachers, administrators, and support staff).

Profile of Model Programs

Individuals working with students who are members of special populations face the challenge of finding creative ways to serve these students and overcome many of the barriers that hinder their success. Those who are successful offer meaningful experiences that lead not only to a good, wholesome education but also to gainful employment. As the following exemplary programs illustrate, success can happen in a variety of settings and backgrounds. The programs are located in small and large schools; in community and technical colleges; and in rich, suburban as well as poor, urban areas. They offer concrete examples of success for those striving to improve their programs for all students and especially for those who are members of special populations.

Each description includes the program title and location, contact person and phone number, population served, total staff, cost per participant, and setting. Both a short description of the program and outcome information are included.

Outreach Equity Nontraditional Program (PAVE—Promoting Access to Vocational Education)

Location:	Brevard Community College, Florida Advanced Technology Center 250 Grassland Road, SE Palm Bay, FL 32909
Telephone:	(407) 951-1060, ext. 2021
Program Coordinator:	Donna Jean
Target Population:	Nontraditional enrollees
Number Served Per Year:	56
Total Staff:	1
Cost Per Participant:	$813.00
Educational Setting:	Community College
Year Named Exemplary:	1992

Outreach Equity supports the efforts of Brevard County residents pursuing nontraditional occupations (NTO) by taking a proactive approach and offering broader opportunities and choices to men and women in education, training, and careers. At the college, NTO students have access to a variety of associate and certificate programs leading to high-wage occupations, including computer programming and analysis, drafting and design technology, electronics engineering technology, and chemical instrumentation technology. All programs are designed to meet the local demand for highly-skilled workers. Strong program components include student recruitment, community outreach/networking, business partnerships, sex equity training, and student support and placement. The college occupies a prime location on the "Space Coast" of Florida, an area with many high-technology firms and a rapidly growing population.

The program staff identify available jobs through personal contact, surveys of local NTO firms, networking with NTO business partners, and participation in local NTO employer committee meetings. Outreach Equity also assists students in résumé preparation and in building skills for the interview process. Furthermore, Outreach Equity provides a complete support-service package which includes financial assistance, student support groups, counseling, career and education planning, and mentoring by nontraditional role models. For example, during assessment and entry into the program, students are

provided with comprehensive career guidance and counseling by the program coordinator and program advisors. Ongoing guidance and counseling is provided periodically through all educational activities and at final job placement. Outreach Equity is a fully developed equity program with positive results, from recruitment to student support to job placement. The program has achieved excellent success in maintaining community involvement, business partnerships, and an overall school system commitment.

Project GRADS (Guidance in Retaining Adolescent Dropouts)

Location:	Child Service Development Center and Central Oklahoma Vocational-Technical School 123 E. Broadway Cushing, OK 74023
Telephone:	(918) 225-1882
Project Director:	Celia Meyers
Target Population:	Students at risk of dropping out
Number Served Per Year:	200
Total Staff:	8
Cost Per Participant:	$2,225.00
Educational Setting:	Secondary Level Area Vocational Center
Year Named Exemplary:	1992

Project GRADS was designed to demonstrate the development and success of a replicable model dropout prevention program for rural areas. The project is an adaptation of the Oklahoma Developer Demonstration Project that targeted services to students with mild to severe disabilities. Project GRADS serves junior high school students who are identified as at risk of dropping out. The project is based at the Child Service Development Center and the Central Oklahoma Vocational-Technical School whose goals are to reduce dropout rates, increase retention rates for adolescent at-risk learners, and increase the academic and vocational skills of at-risk high school students in Cushing and Drumright, Oklahoma.

Services provided by the project include the following: (1) a thorough assessment of abilities, achievement levels, and vocational interests; (2) a professionally staffed resource center; (3) extensive counseling services; (4) prescriptive/adaptive services for instructors; (5) effective interventions to improve self-concept and interest in school and to reduce alienation; (6) adaptation of instructional materials for students with low levels of basic skills; (7) multimedia materials for instruction in both basic and vocational skills; and (8) flexible scheduling of students into the center.

The project has been successful in decreasing the dropout rates of at-risk students through an array of vocational education and ancillary services. For students receiving

these services, the dropout rate was reduced from 25% in the first year to 6% during the third year in both the vocational-technical school and the feeder schools. In addition, the effectiveness of vocational-technical education for decreasing risk factors was also demonstrated through the project's successful outcome results.

Employment Specialist Program (formerly the Vocational Tracker Program)

Location:	Hilda B. Jones Center Granite School District 382 E. 3605 South Salt Lake City, UT 84115
Telephone:	(801) 268-8526
Coordinator:	Jeff Rydalch
Target Population:	Individuals with a broad range of disabilities
Number Served Per Year:	1,200
Total Staff:	19
Cost Per Participant:	$96.12
Educational Setting:	Satellite Programs
Year Named Exemplary:	1992

Salt Lake City's Granite School District supports the transition of individuals with disabilities into work and future life through a unique program called the Employment Specialist Program. Paraprofessionals known as "vocational trackers" are placed in each participating high school district to meet placement needs of students and business, monitor student progress, and help build independence on the job. Trackers accomplish program objectives by (1) assisting students to develop job and social skills, (2) gaining access to community-based work sites for their students, and (3) providing job coaching to help ensure success.

Both informal and formal assessments are used to determine vocational interests. The informal assessment contains four major components, including a one-on-one process involving parents, students, and other individuals who provide critical job-related information. Formal assessment instruments help determine students' interests and aptitudes for their desired careers. The program also offers community-based training and job sites at area businesses for students to explore careers and to obtain paid placement.

The program's approach is collaborative, allowing students' needs to be met efficiently and effectively. The trackers provide a link to school and district programs that will help students move toward their identified goals. Within the school, special education instructors, vocational education instructors, counselors, school psychologists, and

support staff work together to meet student needs. Partnerships are also formed with outside agencies, support groups, and businesses to provide postsecondary transition training related to student needs.

Positive expectations have led to some excellent results, including high program completion rates and numerous job placements. Business and agency partnerships have also continued to develop with as many as 300 businesses and a large number of agencies participating. Initially funded through special education grants, the program is now supported through grants from the Job Training and Partnership Act and the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act, as well as through local funds.

The Learning Achievement Program for the Learning Disabled (LEAP Center)

Location:	New River Community College P.O. Drawer 1127 Dublin, VA 24084
Telephone:	(703) 674-3600, ext. 358
Coordinator:	Jeananne Dixon
Target Population:	Individuals with a broad range of disabilities
Number Served Per Year:	137
Total Staff:	2
Cost Per Participant:	$741.00
Educational Setting:	Community College
Year Named Exemplary:	1992

Initiated in 1984, the Learning Achievement Program for the Learning Disabled (LEAP) annually serves over 125 students with learning disabilities through the New River Community College. LEAP provides academic and personal support services to students with learning disabilities whose abilities qualify them for postsecondary education but whose learning disabilities hinder their chance for success. The LEAP Center is a part of a Regional Interagency Transition Planning Team comprised of local service providers, public school special education departments, and postsecondary education services provided in the college's service region. The team monitors and evaluates student progress to ensure that proper care is taken to develop the full range of services necessary to meet the needs of students with learning disabilities.

LEAP offers a "summer prep" program to provide students with a head start on college life. Additionally, it offers developmental courses and tutoring to help students with weak academic skills. Students learn how to tape lectures, obtain taped textbooks, or arrange for special testing accommodations. They are also helped to understand their problems and their rights in relation to the college community, and to interact appropriately with teachers and others who may not understand their problems. Through assistance from the college's Special Services Program, some of these courses can be offered with smaller student-teacher ratios and with approaches designed to help students with special needs

achieve. Additional needs of the students are met by the college job placement office, career counselors, vocational instructors, and student development personnel.

Because the LEAP staff has provided inservice activities to help the faculty and staff understand and teach students with learning disabilities, the entire campus is sensitized to the special needs of such students. All staff take great pride in the accomplishments of students with learning disabilities who have been in the program. LEAP staff also provide inservices to personnel at other Virginia high schools and community colleges throughout the state.

Electronic Manufacturing Support Specialist Program

Location:	Lake Washington Technical College 11605 132nd Avenue, NE Kirkland, WA 98034
Telephone:	(206) 828-5600
Coordinator:	Richard Dubrul
Target Population Served:	Broad range of special populations
Number Served Per Year:	67
Total Staff:	2
Cost Per Participant:	$3,842.85
Educational Setting:	Community College
Year Named Exemplary:	1992

While the Electronic Manufacturing Support Specialist Program is open to all students who attend Lake Washington Technical College, participants can include nontraditional students, students with limited-English proficiency, those who are academically and/or economically disadvantaged, and students with disabilities. Because the program uses an entirely individualized, competency-based, open-entry, open-exit format, students work at their own pace. Each student works with the instructor to design a customized training plan. Instruction includes life skills as well as employability skills. The program is aimed at teaching all students the skills necessary for entry-level employment and advancement. With assistance from the counseling staff, students with special needs examine their personal interests and learn to connect themselves with specific careers in demand throughout King County. After interests are determined, students' basic skills are evaluated.

Intra- and interagency collaboration arrangements are cultivated and nurtured by the college staff. The college's Integrated Instructional Support Team combines the efforts of staff charged with remediation, limited-English proficiency, assessment, adult education, and counseling to provide support for students with special needs. Regular meetings encourage the accurate and timely flow of information through these key departments. The result of this collaboration is a coordinated delivery of needed services.

The open-entry, open-exit system of enrollment provides diversity in terms of entry-level, middle, and advanced students being in class at the same time. The program is run like an industry shop with students serving in various roles, including supervisor and lab custodian. Projects are organized around the team or cooperative learning concept, and small groups are designed to encourage this teamwork. Once students grasp basic competencies, they may opt for internships or cooperative work experience programs to gain on-the-job experience. There is a strong network of area employers who serve as models for students, donate funds and equipment to keep the shop up-to-date, and, most importantly, hire program completers.

ENCORE! A Single Parent/Displaced Homemaker/ Single Pregnant Woman Program

Location:	Charlotte Vocational Technical Center 18300 Toledo Blade Boulevard Port Charlotte, FL 33948-3399
Telephone:	(813) 629-6819
Program Coordinator:	Carol Watters
Target Population:	Broad range of special populations
Number Served Per Year:	215
Total Staff:	67
Cost Per Participant:	$329.00
Educational Setting:	Technical Institute
Year Named Exemplary:	1993

The ENCORE! program prepares single parents, displaced homemakers, and single pregnant women for high-wage occupations and assists them to become self-sufficient citizens. The program serves as a stepping stone for many women who otherwise would be welfare dependent or employed in low-wage occupations. The administrators, faculty, and staff, as well as the community, actively support the program. Such support enables ENCORE! to offer a comprehensive set of services that include both a six-week curriculum to provide training on career planning, résumé writing, goal-setting, stress management, wardrobing, and job shadowing experiences and a myriad of support services such as child care, transportation, books, tuition, and uniforms (for lab activities). The Charlotte Vocational Technical Center offers participants vocational assessment, individual counseling, and support group interaction.

The program is funded by a Perkins state grant and various local grants. Community groups support the program with scholarship money used for items not covered by Perkins funds. Individuals and businesses donate new and used clothing for "Carol's Closet," a corner in Carol Watters' classroom containing an assortment of clothing for students (who often do not have the means to buy clothes) to wear in class and during job interviews. Other community agencies such as the Dream House Board, a program designed to help participants own a home, provide support.

Program success is reflected by a significantly high retention rate of participants and the high level of self-esteem developed by participants. The ENCORE! program is also a recipient of many awards including the Florida Exemplary Program award in 1988 and 1992, and the Florida Excellence in Equity Award in March 1993. ENCORE! works across many areas to uphold excellence in its overall program and for its participants.

CHOICE (Community Helping Our Youth in Career Education)

Location:	Clark County Special Education Cooperative 2710 Highway 62 Jeffersonville, IN 47130
Telephone:	(812) 288-4840
Coordinators:	Loretta Broady and Bonnie Allphin
Target Population:	Individuals with disadvantages and disabilities
Number Served Per Year:	260
Total Staff:	27
Cost Per Participant:	$515.00
Educational Setting:	Comprehensive High School
Year Named Exemplary:	1993

The CHOICE program is a joint effort between the Clark County Special Education Cooperative and the business community. The program's goal is to assist students to be as independent and employable as possible by offering them realistic vocational experiences in the school and community environment. The program serves about 260 students each year, ages 13 to 21. These students represent a variety of disabilities, including learning, emotional, physical, and different degrees of mental disabilities.

CHOICE is designed to be a comprehensive program that begins with classroom instruction during the 9th grade in such areas as the development of social, daily living, and employability skills; career exploration; and job training. A variety of teaching techniques are used by instructional staff and may include lecture, group discussion, or role playing. Some of these skills are taught in the community as well as in the classroom. As 9th graders, students learn these skills in the classroom, make field trips to area businesses, and listen to business representatives who very eagerly volunteer their time to share their experiences with the students. During the 11th and 12th grades, the students pursue further vocational training either at school or through a cooperative education program. All these experiences better prepare students to select a vocational course of study that matches their interests and abilities. The ultimate goal of the program is to make each student as independent as possible.

The school's administrative staff provides strong support, both financial and moral. Support services may include job coaching, counseling, career preparation, transportation, and occupational therapy. While much of the funding comes from local, state, and federal sources, community agencies donate or raise funds to buy instructional materials for the students. Area businesses provide students with job shadowing experiences, paid work experiences, and job training and employ students who have completed their training. Excellent outcome results are shown through high retention and completion rates, as well as through the attainment of full-time employment.

Reentry Transition Program

Location:	Moraine Park Technical College 235 N. National Avenue Fond du Lac, WI 54936-1940
Telephone:	(414) 922-8611
Manager:	Joan M. Visintainer
Target Population:	Displaced homemakers, single parents, and disadvantaged individuals
Number Served Per Year:	418
Total Staff:	6
Cost Per Participant:	$396.00
Educational Setting:	Technical Institute
Year Named Exemplary:	1993

The Reentry Transition Program serves displaced homemakers; students who are disadvantaged; single parents who are on welfare or who are divorced, separated, or widowed; and individuals who wish to become self-sufficient through employment or further education. Students receive comprehensive prevocational services in a postsecondary setting. The curriculum covers the following areas: self-development (72 hours), career planning (72 hours), a success skills course (36 hours), and an adventure-based career challenge (e.g., Ropes, 30 hours). Students are provided transportation, child care reimbursement, tuition, fees, and materials. Participants who elect to pursue programs at Moraine Park Technical College (MPTC) are directed into programs that match or surpass MPTC's graduate median wage. MPTC provides services such as assessment, financial aid, counseling, help of support specialists for those with disabilities, peer tutoring, and support groups. Placement and employment services are available through MPTC or the network built by the Reentry program.

The program has strong administrative leadership and support; coordinators and staff who are advocates of the participants; and a stable and diverse funding from local, state, and federal sources. Participants receive services and support throughout their stay in MPTC and after they have completed the Reentry curriculum. Program outcomes reflect excellent success throughout a number of areas, including increased self-esteem and

self-confidence; educational participation in college and university programs; and/or meaningful, productive employment.

Center for High Tech Training for Individuals with Disabilities

Location:	Valencia Community College P.O. Box 3028 MC3-12 Orlando, FL 32802
Telephone:	(407) 299-5000, ext. 2222
Director:	Deborah Clark
Target Population:	Individuals with severe disabilities
Number Served Per Year:	38
Total Staff:	10
Cost Per Participant:	$11,227.75
Educational Setting:	Community College
Year Named Exemplary:	1993

Valencia Community College houses the Center for High Tech Training for Individuals with Disabilities (Center). Through the Center, individuals with severe disabilities who were previously unemployed are trained to become computer programmers or computer-assisted design professionals and placed in jobs. The Center operates two programs: (1) Computer Programmer Training and (2) Computer-Assisted Design and Drafting, both designed for individuals with disabilities. The hallmark of the Center's operation is its partnership with businesses in the area. Business representatives serve in three advisory councils that have the following roles: (1) establish standards for trainee selection and interview trainees, (2) advise on appropriate curriculum and training materials, (3) evaluate trainee performance, and (4) assist in job placement by offering special training in interview and job-seeking skills and by identifying potential employers in the community. Business representatives develop and annually review both programs' curricula, which include a technical and professional development dimension. In addition, both programs require the students to pursue a summer internship.

Operated by a staff of ten professionals, the programs use the latest facilities, equipment, and software to familiarize the students with all the tools they will use when employed. The programs are also administered in a business-oriented, professional manner. Thus, students are required to dress professionally and communicate both orally and in writing.

Success of the program is evident through an average job completion rate of over 90%. The college's lengthy involvement in providing services to students with disabilities has resulted in highly positive attitudes on the part of instructional, administrative, and support personnel. The Center successfully enables its participants to work and live as productive members of the community.

Mission Trails Regional Occupational Program's Assessment Program

Location:	Mission Trails Regional Occupational Program 867 E. Laurel Drive Salinas, CA 93905
Telephone:	(408) 753-4203
Assistant Vocational Director:	Patrick Keating
Vocational Counselor:	Roxanne Panduro
Target Population:	Broad range of special populations
Number Served Per Year:	1,400
Total Staff:	13
Cost Per Participant:	$270.00
Educational Setting:	Regional Occupational Program
Year Named Exemplary:	1994

The Assessment Program of the Mission Trails Regional Occupational Program provides career assessment and guidance to youth and adults so that they can develop a realistic career plan and obtain the assistance needed to carry it out. The program serves youth and adults from the Salinas Union High School District, a majority of whom are members of special populations. These individuals include those who are disadvantaged, persons with disabilities, single and teen parents, and those with limited-English proficiency.

Mission Trails ensures that students who are members of special populations have equal access to vocational programs by offering career exploration, assessment, guidance, and follow-up support services. The program offers a variety of formal and informal assessment activities designed to generate information for staff and students' use in vocational program planning and career guidance. Additional services include the Exploratorium (introduces middle school students to vocational opportunities using hands-on career exploration activities) and WorkAbility (assists youth and adults with disabilities in transitioning to the world of work through referrals to related agencies, job readiness training, and job placement). Observable outcomes of this program include completion of a

high school education, attainment of part- or full-time work, and/or advancement to higher level training or education.

In 1983, this program was selected as a model site for vocational assessment by the California State Department of Education and has been a leader in the development of the California Career/Vocational Assessment Model. From 1987 through 1990, the Assessment Program was selected as a demonstration site in California for the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment program in the area of vocational assessment.

Supermarket Careers Community-Based Transition

Location:	Rolla Technical Institute 1304 E. Tenth Street Rolla, MO 65401
Telephone:	(314) 364-3726
Program Coordinator/Instructor:	Teri Carty
Target Population:	Individuals with a broad range of disabilities
Number Served Per Year:	24
Total Staff:	8
Cost Per Participant:	$1,500.00
Educational Setting:	Secondary Level Area Vocational Center
Year Named Exemplary:	1994

The Supermarket Careers program, a successful collaborative undertaking between education and industry, prepares students to transition from school to work. The program targets secondary students in the district, including those with disabilities, and postsecondary students recommended by support agencies. It is designed to demonstrate that individuals who are members of special populations can be successfully trained and employed in the supermarket industry. The major goals of this program are training and the smooth transition from school to work.

Funded by Perkins dollars and other local funds, the program offers specialized classroom training, community-based education, and a four-week internship at participating local grocery stores. Students receive classroom instruction on reading and math, safety, sanitation, résumé and cover letter writing, how to fill out job application forms, interview techniques, and human relations. Through daily hands-on training in a mini-mart classroom setting, students develop skills relating to all facets of the supermarket industry (e.g., pricing, stocking, inventory, advertising, and maintenance). In addition to mastering supermarket skills, students learn the significance of teamwork, positive work ethics, and interpersonal skills. Participating business establishments like Wal-Mart, K-Mart, National Foods, Krogers, and other local stores provide students with job shadowing experience and job training and employ successful graduates.

Nontraditional Options Project

Location:	Blackhawk Technical College 6004 Prairie Road Janesville, WI 53547
Telephone:	(608) 757-7752
Project Coordinator:	Barbara J. Bendlin
Target Population:	Nontraditional enrollees
Number Served Per Year:	103
Total Staff:	2
Cost Per Participant:	$479.00
Educational Setting:	Technical Institute
Year Named Exemplary:	1994

Blackhawk Technical College's Nontraditional Options Project is designed to enhance students'—particularly women's—awareness of nontraditional trades and offer them the opportunity to enter high-paying nontraditional occupations (NTOs). The project stresses recruitment, retention, and placement assistance. Activities include a nine-day nontraditional options career exploration workshop, a four-day career challenge workshop, and several pre-tech workshops.

In each career exploration workshop, the staff use hands-on approaches that expose students to nontraditional careers, including robotics; mechanical design; electronics; welding; machining; auto mechanics; and apprenticeable trades such as plumbing, electrical trades, and carpentry. Students actually (1) operate a computer for product design, (2) test electrical circuits, (3) repair a copy machine, (4) use a lathe to make a metal part, and (5) weld steel components. The career challenge workshop features activities that encourage trust-building, goal-setting, problem-solving, effective communication, risk-taking, self-confidence, and teamwork. Pre-tech workshops familiarize women with basic and advance math, tools, measuring devices, and the vocabulary of their chosen field. Topics on assertiveness, time management, study skills, and how to deal with harassment are also covered.

Participants also receive an array of support services, including financial assistance for texts and tools, tutorial support, individual counseling, mentoring, placement agency

referrals, and job referrals for students who choose to pursue NTOs. Successful program graduates become ambassadors for the program by becoming NTO role models and making presentations during workshops.

Network of Services and Transformations

Location:	Pinellas Technical Education Center 6100 154th Avenue Clearwater, FL 34620
Telephone:	(813) 538-7167
Administrator:	Clide Cassity
Target Population:	Broad range of special populations
Number Served Per Year:	3,659
Total Staff:	37
Cost Per Participant:	$864.00
Educational Setting:	Technical Institute
Year Named Exemplary:	1994

Pinellas Technical Education Center at Clearwater (PTEC-Clearwater), through the Network of Services and Transformations (NST), is dedicated to providing assistance to students who are members of special populations. Using a variety of funding resources, NST offers numerous programs and services, including a community involvement program, a teen parent career program, an English for Speakers of Other Languages program, and a System for Applied Individualized Learning program. This network of services was intended to catch students from all areas of special populations who need extra help. These students include individuals with disabilities, those who are educationally and economically disadvantaged (including foster children), dropouts, single and teen parents, immigrants, and individuals in correctional institutions.

PTEC-Clearwater provides these students with the technical training to secure and maintain employment, enabling them to be economically self-sufficient, to adapt to an evolving workplace, and to be willing lifelong learners. More specifically, it provides (1) training that ensures that participants will receive employment and high wages, (2) workshops about the rights of adults with disabilities, (3) technical assistance in implementing the Individual Handicapped Adult Education Plan, and (4) on-the-job training for adults with disabilities.

NST staff consists of specialized personnel, including a vocational resource educator, a financial aid specialist, an interpreter for the hearing impaired, and a variety of

counselors. Coordinators monitor each program's progress on an ongoing basis. They record and analyze data needed to meet stated goals. The network is officially evaluated on a monthly basis to determine the number of students who are served and the effectiveness of these services. A follow-up is made to determine alternative measures when present services are not working.

Partnership for Professional Technical Education Services

Location:	Parrott Creek Ranch, Inc. 22518 S. Parrott Creek Road Oregon City, OR 97045
Telephone:	(503) 655-9144
Executive Director:	Douglas W. Poppen
Target Population:	Incarcerated individuals/offenders
Number Served Per Year:	145
Total Staff:	2
Cost Per Participant:	$925.16
Educational Setting:	Residential Treatment Center
Year Named Exemplary:	1994

Parrott Creek Ranch, Inc. (PCR) is a nonprofit, residential treatment facility for 14- to 21-year-old males who would otherwise be placed in the state training school. These youth have been removed from their communities by order of the juvenile courts. They live at the facility for an average of six months and participate in the Partnership for Professional Technical Education Services program designed to help them successfully reintegrate into the community. The program provides (1) family, individual, and group counseling; (2) social skills building; (3) recreation; (4) drug and alcohol rehabilitation services; (5) court liaison services; (6) casework services; (7) employment opportunity; and (8) academic and vocational education. When clients leave PCR, they receive an additional four to six months of post-residential counseling and support services.

Nearly all of the youth placed at PCR lack skills to become successful community members. A critical element of their treatment is to provide rehabilitative opportunities, including professional technical education programs and job placement services in conjunction with individual and family counseling. Through the Youth Employment Service (YES) component of PCR, students in this program receive pre-employment training, vocational instruction, community college technical education, on-campus and off-campus work experience, as well as job placement and follow-up services.

This innovative program features a low per student cost, high completion rate, and low recidivism rate. It makes wide use of volunteers and collaborates extensively with

various county and state agencies, businesses, and a community college in the area. The YES component has been recognized by the county and the JTPA Private Industry Council for exemplary service.

Great Oaks Special Needs Occupational Development Program

Location:	Great Oaks Institute of Technology and Career Development 3254 E. Kemper Road Cincinnati, OH 45241
Telephone:	(513) 771-8840
Manager of Disability Education:	Margaret A. Hess
Target Population:	Individuals with a broad range of disabilities
Number Served Per Year:	1,110
Total Staff:	65
Cost Per Participant:	$1,653.00
Educational Setting:	Secondary Level Area Vocational Center
Year Named Exemplary:	1994

The Great Oaks Institute of Technology and Career Development provides vocational education for students from 36 school districts in southwestern Ohio. Giving specific consideration to the needs and goals of high school youth, out-of-school youth, and adults, Great Oaks provides instructional programs and related services necessary to help these individuals achieve their goals. Students, including those who are members of special populations, choose from seventy inclusive vocational programs and may participate in either half-day or full-day vocational programs. A majority of the programs are offered in inclusive settings; three specialized programs are offered for only students with disabilities. All programs prepare students for many occupational fields. The mission is to prepare youth and adults for entry-level positions and/or postsecondary education.

Services for students with developmental disabilities are provided through the Occupational Development Program in a variety of methods. Vocational assessment, job training, supplemental instructional support services, job coaching, and specialized job development and placement services are offered to ensure that these students will be successful in education and employment.

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Appendix A

Rating Form for Evaluating Exemplary Program Applications

Office of Special Populations
National Center for Research in Vocational Education
University of California at Berkeley
University of Illinois Site
345 Education Building
1310 S. Sixth Street
Champaign, IL 61820

1994 NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR EXEMPLARY VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS SERVING SPECIAL NEEDS POPULATIONS

To the Reviewer: The enclosed Rating Form corresponds directly to the Application and Guidelines for the National Recognition for Exemplary Vocational Education Programs Serving Special Needs Populations. There are four parts to the application which are assigned points as follows:

- Part 1 of the application is worth 2 points.
- Part 2 of the application is worth 12 points.
- Part 3 of the application is worth 6 points.
- Part 4 of the application is worth 80 points. (Each of the twenty [20] components included in Part 4 of the application is worth 4 points.)

The Rating Form and the accompanying guidelines for its completion have been developed to assist you during the evaluation process. **Please read the guidelines for completing the Rating Form before beginning to evaluate the enclosed application.**

We suggest that reviewers start at the midpoint of the scoring range for each section being reviewed and subtract points for missing information or add points for exemplary information. For example, in Part 3: Program Information, start with 3 points then add one point for an excellent abstract, another point for program history, and subtract a point for a poor description of program operation. The Rating Form attached to the application should help you complete the review process. **Only the completed Rating Form need be returned to the Office of Special Populations** (now Office of Student Services [OSS]).

Thank you very much for your help.

GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATING APPLICATION

PART 1: General Information, 2 points possible

This section should be complete, containing all of the required information.

PART 2: Demographic Information, 12 points possible

This section should be complete, containing all of the required information. The reviewer should focus on measures of effectiveness, comparing the information supplied to other programs or extant knowledge of the field.

PART 3: Program Information, 6 points possible

This section asks applicants to provide a brief program abstract, to describe the program's history, and to explain the program operation. Please rate each of these elements according to the descriptions given below.

Program Abstract

The abstract should be a single page description of the program, not to exceed 300 words. The abstract should describe the mission and legal status (e.g., school district, nonprofit organization) of the applicant agency, define the purpose of the program, how that purpose relates to the needs of the special population served, the goals of the program, the method used to achieve those goals, and the observable outcomes attained by program participants. (2 points)

Program History

The program history should be a single page description of the background and theoretical framework of the program, not to exceed 300 words. The program history should include the names and titles of the developers of the program, why the program was developed, the date the program was developed, the dates of program operation, the dates and personnel who have conducted previous evaluations (attach and cite reports in appendix), previous formal recognitions of program effectiveness, and the role of the program within the larger agency or organization. (2 points)

Program Operation

The program operation should be a single page description of how the program operates, not to exceed 300 words. The description should include program staffing patterns and responsibilities, the number and diversity of program participants served, the link between program completion and outcomes attained, the scope of the program, the instructional approach actually used, the instructional materials actually used, the innovativeness of the program, and the outside agencies that cooperate and collaborate with the program. (2 points)

PART 4: Components of Effective Vocational Education Programs, 80 points possible

This section asks applicants to describe twenty (20) programmatic components. Each of the components is worth a possible 4 points. Please rate each of these components according to the descriptions given below.

A. Program Administration

1. Administrative Leadership and Support

This section should describe how administrators of both the program and the larger agency or organization function in leadership roles within the program, and the support these administrators offer to the program. This description should include a list of the program administrators and their roles within the program, qualitative descriptions of administrative support, and examples of hands-on leadership and support provided to the program by administrators.

2. Financial Support

This section should present a brief explanation of the recurring and nonrecurring costs associated with the program, including personnel salaries, staff training costs, equipment and materials costs, and any other special costs required to successfully implement and maintain the program. The sources of funding for the program should be listed. Budgets should be cited and attached as appendices.

3. Professional Development

This section contains a description of the professional development activities obtained or conducted by the program. This description should include any preservice, inservice, and/or continuing education obtained by program staff. Additionally, a description of the professional development activities conducted by program staff for others such as teachers, programs, or educational agencies should be provided.

4. Formative Program Evaluation

The formative evaluation procedure used by the program should be described in this section. This description should include information on how formative evaluation procedures are conducted, who leads the evaluations, who has access to the evaluation results, and how those results are used to guide the program. The description should be supported by formative evaluation reports.

5. Summative Program Evaluation

This section should contain a description of the summative evaluation procedure utilized by the program. This description should include the agency or staff conducting the evaluation, how the evaluation relates to the program purpose and goals, the design of the evaluation, the instruments and procedures used during the evaluation, the data collected, analysis of that data, and how the summative evaluation results are utilized. The description should be supported by summative evaluation reports.

B. Curriculum and Instruction

1. Individualized Curriculum Modifications

The principles of individualized instruction utilized within the program should be described in this section. This description should include the individualized educational planning process utilized within the program, persons involved in that planning process, and the methods used by program staff to provide and ensure that the principles of individualized instruction are maintained to benefit program participants.

2. Integration of Academic and Vocational Curricula

This section should provide a description of how the program provides instruction in both basic academic skills and appropriate vocational skills. This description should include a sequential list of courses taken and the skills attained by program completers, how the program meets local graduation requirements, how the teachers integrate academic and vocational instruction, the length of the program for special population participants, and the specific vocational options available to special population program participants.

3. Instructional Settings

This section should contain a description of the diversity of the special population participants served by the program, and the extent to which the program operates in mainstream settings. This description should detail the needs, backgrounds, abilities, and interests of program participants and how that diversity is represented and fostered in courses and support services offered by the program. If appropriate, the number and classification of special population participants served in separate vocational education programs should be indicated.

4. Cooperative Learning Experiences

This section should contain a description of the cooperative learning experiences (i.e., students learning from other students) provided within the program. This description should include the scope and extent of cooperative learning experiences offered to program participants and how those experiences relate to the purpose and goals of the program.

C. Instructional Support Services

1. Assessment of Individual's Vocational Interests and Abilities

A description of the procedures utilized by program staff to assess program participant's vocational interests and abilities and how that assessment is utilized in individual program planning should be presented in this section. This description should include the process, resources, and materials used

to assess the vocational interests, aptitudes, and abilities of program participants.

2. Instructional Support Services

This section should provide a description of the instructional support services utilized within the program to meet the purpose and goals of the program. This section can include any resources, special materials, and/or personnel (e.g., teacher aides) involved in the program that uniquely assist in achieving the stated goals of the program.

3. Career Guidance and Counseling

The career guidance and counseling services offered to program participants should be described in this section. This description should include the amount and extent of career guidance and counseling services offered to program participants, when it is usually provided, qualifications of the counselors, and any involvement counselors have in the general operation of the program.

D. Formalized Articulation and Communication

1. Family/Parental Involvement and Support

If applicable, this section should contain a description of the ways that this program involves the parents of participants. This description should include information regarding the involvement of parents in (1) general program planning and development, (2) planning for their children, and (3) advisory roles.

2. Notification of Both Students and Parents Regarding Vocational Opportunities

A description of the procedures utilized by program staff to inform potential special population students and their parents of vocational and educational options available through the program should be presented in this section. This description should include the methods, procedures, and resources utilized by program staff to notify prospective participants and their parents,

if applicable, of vocational education program options and support services available.

3. Vocational Educators Involvement in Individualized Educational Planning

A description of how vocational educators are involved in the individualized instructional planning process utilized by the program should be presented in this section. This description should detail the individualized educational planning process utilized by the program, the intake procedure for admitting students into the program, the persons involved in that process, and, specifically, how vocational educators are involved in the process.

4. Formalized Transition Planning

This section should describe the procedure utilized by the program to provide individual program participants with formalized transition planning. Transition can be defined as the movement of a completing special population student from one level or program to the next appropriate level or program (e.g., from a secondary school setting to a postsecondary vocational education program, a community-based rehabilitation program, and/or work). The description should include the program staff and outside agencies involved in the transition process, and the transitional options that generally exist for special population participants as they exit the program.

5. Intra- and Interagency Collaboration

A description of both the intra- and interagency collaboration arrangements developed and maintained by program staff should be presented in this section. The description of intra-agency collaboration arrangements should include (1) departments and programs within the educational institution which provide support services, resources, and general assistance to either the special population students or the staff of the vocational special needs program; (2) the coordination activities conducted; and (3) the benefits of this collaboration. The description of the interagency cooperative arrangements should (1) name the external agencies and organizations (the contact personnel) that provide assistance to program staff and/or

participants, (2) detail the services and resources provided, and (3) outline the benefits occurring from these collaborative efforts.

E. Occupational Experience Opportunities, Placement, and Follow-Up

1. Work Experience Opportunities

A description of the work experience opportunities that are available to program participants during their enrollment within the program should be provided in this section. This description should include the type and nature of work experiences that are available to program participants, how those experiences relate to the instructional objectives of the program, and the extent to which the experiences are specific to the vocational education and training received by the special population students.

2. Job Placement Services

This section should present a description of the job placement services received by program participants. This description should include (1) the methods used to identify available jobs (including full-time, part-time, and summer jobs) for special population students enrolled in the program and (2) the procedures used to assist students in acquiring appropriate jobs during or following program completion.

3. Follow-Up of Graduates and Nongraduates

A description of the data and information collected by program staff from program graduates and those who do not complete the program should be presented in this section. This description should include (1) the procedure utilized by program staff to collect follow-up information, (2) how that information is analyzed and reported, and (3) how that information is used to improve the program and services.

RATING FORM

Applicant: _____

Signature of Reviewer: _____

Date: _____

			Total
Part 1:	General Information	2 points possible	_____
Part 2:	Demographic Information	12 points possible	_____
Part 3:	Program Information	6 points possible	_____
Part 4:	Components	80 points possible	_____

A. Program Administration

1. Administrative Leadership and Support	4 points possible	_____
2. Financial Support	4 points possible	_____
3. Professional Development	4 points possible	_____
4. Formative Program Evaluation	4 points possible	_____
5. Summative Program Evaluation	4 points possible	_____

B. Curriculum and Instruction

1. Individualized Curriculum Modifications	4 points possible	_____
2. Integration of Academic and Vocational Curricula	4 points possible	_____
3. Instructional Settings	4 points possible	_____
4. Cooperative Learning Experiences	4 points possible	_____

C. Instructional Support Services

1. Assessment of Individual's Vocational Interests and Abilities	4 points possible	_____

2. Instructional Support Services	4 points possible	_____
3. Career Guidance and Counseling	4 points possible	_____

D. Formalized Articulation and Communication

1. Family/Parental Involvement and Support (Not applicable for postsecondary. Many postsecondary programs do not work with parents. Assign 4 points.)	4 points possible	_____
2. Notification of Both Students and Parents Regarding Vocational Opportunities	4 points possible	_____
3. Vocational Educators Involvement in Individualized Educational Planning	4 points possible	_____
4. Formalized Transition Planning	4 points possible	_____
5. Intra- and Interagency Collaboration	4 points possible	_____

E. Occupational Experience Opportunities, Placement, and Follow-Up

1. Work Experience Opportunities	4 points possible	_____
2. Job Placement Services	4 points possible	_____
3. Follow-Up of Graduates and Nongraduates	4 points possible	_____

TOTAL: _____ **100 points possible**

Overall Comments: (Please list major strengths and weaknesses/concerns about the program.)

Overall Recommendation:

_____ Do not recommend for site visit/evaluation.

_____ Recommend for site visit/evaluation. (Please indicate below your concerns about the program, if any, that need to be addressed during the visit.)

Appendix B

A Checklist for Evaluating Exemplary Programs

While it is impossible to build an exemplary program overnight, OSS believes it is possible to determine a program's potential as an exemplary program. The following checklist can be used for that purpose. It can also be used to detect gaps in a program's operation. A majority of "Yes" responses does not identify a program as exemplary. Rather, it indicates that a program meets some of the more observable criteria that the OSS identified as necessary for an exemplary program.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION	Yes	No	NA
1. Administrative Leadership and Support			
Is an organizational chart/table identifying operational elements and administrative personnel in charge available?	___	___	___
In what areas is administrative support provided?			
funding?	___	___	___
advocacy?	___	___	___
marketing?	___	___	___
other?			
2. Financial Support			
Is funding stable and reliable?	___	___	___
Are sources of funding diverse (from both local and state funds)?	___	___	___
Do records of recurring and nonrecurring funds exist?	___	___	___
3. Professional Development			
Is inservice or continuing education provided for all program staff?	___	___	___

	Yes	No	NA
Do staff members have input on inservice activities?	___	___	___
Are support/incentives available for staff to attend inservice activities?	___	___	___

4. Formative Program Evaluation

How is data on program effectiveness collected?

through surveys?	___	___	___
other assessments?	___	___	___
other methods?	___	___	___

How often are program evaluation reports prepared?

at regular intervals?	___	___	___
during the year?	___	___	___
Are evaluation reports available for use by key program personnel?	___	___	___

Which groups provide feedback on program effectiveness?

teachers and other staff members?	___	___	___
students?	___	___	___
parents?	___	___	___
business/community representatives?	___	___	___
other individuals or groups?	___	___	___

	Yes	No	NA
5. Summative Program Evaluation			
Is an annual or biannual program evaluation conducted?	___	___	___
Who conducts the program evaluation?			
an internal evaluator?	___	___	___
an external evaluator?	___	___	___
Is sufficient information collected to provide evidence of effectiveness?	___	___	___

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Individualized Curriculum Modifications			
How is curriculum modified?			
through use of computers?	___	___	___
writing or adapting separate lesson plans?	___	___	___
use of other media to deliver instruction?	___	___	___
use of teacher aides?	___	___	___
use of tutors?	___	___	___
use of mentors?	___	___	___
2. Integration of Academic and Vocational Curricula			
How are academic and vocational curricula integrated?			
use of applied academic learning materials?	___	___	___
through integrated courses?	___	___	___

	Yes	No	NA
team teaching between an academic and a vocational teacher?	___	___	___
involvement in Tech Prep initiatives?	___	___	___
participation in career academies?	___	___	___

3. Appropriate Instructional Settings

In what settings are students who are members of special populations placed?

fully included in regular education classes?	___	___	___
partially included in regular education classes?	___	___	___

4. Cooperative Learning Experiences

What types of cooperative learning experiences are available?

group projects, in or out of classroom?	___	___	___
peer tutoring?	___	___	___
student organizations?	___	___	___
senior projects?	___	___	___

COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT SERVICES

1. Assessment of Vocational Interests and Abilities

Are students' interests and abilities assessed using a combination of instruments and techniques?	___	___	___

	Yes	No	NA
Does assessment begin during 8th grade or lower?	___	___	___

2. Instructional Support Services

What types of support services are available?

tutors?	___	___	___
mentors?	___	___	___
rehabilitation counselors?	___	___	___
psychologists?	___	___	___
job coaches?	___	___	___
adaptive devices?	___	___	___
financial support for books, tools, and so on?	___	___	___
child care?	___	___	___

3. Career Guidance and Counseling

Are guidance and counseling activities conducted by certified guidance counselors?	___	___	___

What types of guidance and counseling activities occur?

individual counseling?	___	___	___
assessment of interests and abilities?	___	___	___
career planning?	___	___	___
consulting with teachers and parents?	___	___	___
group counseling?	___	___	___

	Yes	No	NA
job shadowing?	___	___	___
field trips to various businesses?	___	___	___
Is the guidance counselor-to-student ratio no higher than 1:300?	___	___	___

FORMALIZED ARTICULATION AND COMMUNICATION

1. Family/Parental Involvement and Support

Are there opportunities for parents and family members to participate in school planning and other education-related activities?	___	___	___
Do parents avail themselves of these opportunities?	___	___	___
Are parents/family intricately involved in the school programs?	___	___	___

2. Notification of Both Students and Parents Regarding Vocational Opportunities

When is information about vocational opportunities available?

during the 9th grade?	___	___	___
before the 9th grade?	___	___	___
Are brochures, newsletters, and other forms of information dissemination (e.g., radio, newspapers, presentations in community) utilized?	___	___	___
Is the information in a format that both students and parents will understand?	___	___	___

	Yes	No	NA
What type of information is disseminated?			
programs?	___	___	___
eligibility for enrollment?	___	___	___
specific courses?	___	___	___
special services?	___	___	___
employment opportunities?	___	___	___
placement?	___	___	___
financial aid?	___	___	___

3. Vocational Educators' Involvement in Individualized Educational Planning

Are vocational teachers of classes where student will be placed present during individualized educational planning meetings?	___	___	___
Are the roles of vocational teachers and others involved clearly stated?	___	___	___

4. Formalized Transition Planning

Does an individualized transition plan (ITP) exist for each student?	___	___	___
Is the ITP prepared during 9th grade and no later than the 11th grade?	___	___	___
Does the plan indicate the individuals who are involved in the process and their roles?	___	___	___
Do students have input in the plan?	___	___	___

	Yes	No	NA
5. Intra- and Interagency Collaboration			
Do various offices in the organization provide services and support to the program?	___	___	___
Are the services provided (type of involvement) and contact persons in these various offices clearly stated?	___	___	___
Do community agencies and businesses provide support to the program?	___	___	___
Which types of support are provided?			
serving as tutors and mentors?	___	___	___
donations (e.g., cash, equipment, supplies)?	___	___	___
volunteering for various classroom/school activities?	___	___	___
participation on advisory committees?	___	___	___
providing work experience and job training?	___	___	___

OCCUPATIONAL EXPERIENCE OPPORTUNITIES, PLACEMENT, AND FOLLOW-UP

1. Work Experience Opportunities			
Does the program provide formal work experience to students?	___	___	___
Where does work experience occur?			
in school?	___	___	___
out of school?	___	___	___

	Yes	No	NA
Is placement in work experience based on an assessment of student's interests and abilities?	___	___	___
Is the assessment conducted by qualified guidance counselors?	___	___	___

2. Job Placement Services

Is there a designated person whose major responsibility is searching for businesses which may provide job placement to students in the program?	___	___	___
Does the entire school population participate in this process?	___	___	___
Is training or assistance in developing résumés and job interview skills provided?	___	___	___
Does a networking system exist which the school can draw upon for job placement?	___	___	___

3. Follow-Up of Graduates and Nongraduates

When is follow-up data on participants collected?			
upon graduation?	___	___	___
three months after graduation?	___	___	___
six months to a year after graduation?	___	___	___
Are reports summarizing the follow-up information prepared and shared with key program personnel?	___	___	___
Do school administrators, program coordinators, and staff use these reports for program planning and improvement?	___	___	___